Darumbal language

Darumbal (Dharambal) is a language of Queensland in Australia declared extinct. It was spoken in the Rockhampton area of Queensland. Dialects were Kuinmabara (Guwinmal), Karunbara, Rakiwara, Wapabura. It is classified with Bayali as a Kingkel language, but the two are not close, with a low 21% shared vocabulary.[3][4] Indeed, Angela Terrill states that "there is no evidence on which to base a claim of a low-level genetic group including Dharumbal with any other language."[4]

Darumbal	
Guwinmal	
Region	Queensland
Ethnicity	Darumbal, Koinjmal (Guwinmal), Woppaburra
Extinct	(date missing)
Language family	Pama–Nyungan ▪ Maric ▪ Kingkel? ▪ **Darumbal**
Dialects	Kuinmabara (Guwinmal) Karunbara Rakiwara Wapabara
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	xgm
Glottolog	dhar1248 (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/dhar1248)[1]
AIATSIS[2]	E46 (https://collection.aiatsis.gov.au/austlang/language/E46)

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Name

Spelling and Pronunciation

There is some variation in the naming of the language community. Walter Roth spells *Ta-rum-bal* and *Taroombal* while Norman Tindale records *Dharumbal* and cites the alternatives *Tarumbul*, *Tarambol*, *Tarmbal* and *Charumbul*. Nils Holmer, who undertook the first modern field study of the language[5] uses **Darumbal**, as does the Darumbal-Noolar Murree Aboriginal Corporation for Land and Culture (https://www.atns.net.au/agreement.asp?EntityID=4821). However, Holmer also uses ⟨D⟩ to indicate an interdental stop (where others have used ⟨dh⟩), and indeed, he alphabetises *Darumbal* along with other words beginning with an interdental stop, making his *Darumbal* equivalent in pronunciation to *Dharumbal*. From the available material then, Angela Terrill justifiably uses **Dharumbal**.[6]

Phonology[7]

Consonant inventory

		Bilabial	Apical	Laminal	Velar
Stop	**Voiceless**	p	t	th	k
	Voiced	b	d	dh	g
Nasal		m	n	nh	ng
Lateral			l		
Rhotic	**Retroflex continuant**		r		
	Voiceless trill		rh		
	Voiced trill		rr		
Semivowel			y	w	

Map of traditional lands of Aboriginal people around Mackay, Rockhampton and Gladstone, Queensland.

Voicing distinction of stops

Dharumbal possesses a rare distinction (among Pama-Nyungan languages) between voiced and voiceless stops, which seems to be maintained intervocalically, but not in other environments, where voicing seems to be in free variation. This observation, posited by Holmer and maintained by Terrill, is supported by the consistency to which older authors transcribed certain words; intervocalically, there is greater consistency in the use of a certain symbol, while in other environments (word-initially, after liquids), there is more variation.

Other Pama-Nyungan languages with a voicing distinction of stops include Thangatti, Marrgany-Gunya, Wangkumara, and Diyari.

Laminals

Laminal consonants are often realised interdentally, but may also be realised palatally in any position, except for the laminal nasal, which must be realised palatally in word-final position.

Laterals

Lateral consonants may not appear word-initially.

Rhotics

From the existing material, Terrill concludes that there were likely three phonemically distinct rhotic consonants: a retroflex continuant, and two trills, distinguished by voicing. The two trills only appear intervocalically and never word-initially. The (near) minimal pairs given by Stephen Wurm are:

- *wuru* "son"
- *wurhu* "nose"
- *gurru* "fly"

Additional minimal pairs were observed by Holmer.

Vowel inventory

i		u
	a	

Dharumbal has three phonemic vowels. Terrill finds no evidence for contrastive vowel length. Roth used various diacritics in his transcriptions, but no explanation for their function was provided.

Notes

Citations

1. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Dharumbal" (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/dhar1248). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
2. E46 (https://collection.aiatsis.gov.au/austlang/language/E46) Darumbal at the Australian Indigenous Languages Database, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
3. Dixon 2002, pp. xxxiv.
4. Terrill 2002, pp. 15.
5. Holmer 1983.
6. Terrill 2002, pp. 14.
7. Terrill 2002, pp. 17-28.

Sources

- Dixon, R. M. W. (2002). *Australian Languages: Their Nature and Development* (http://www.cambridge.org/catalogue/catalogue.asp?isbn=0521473780). Cambridge University Press.
- Holmer, Nils (1983). "Darumbal". *Linguistic survey of south-east Queensland*. Pacific Linguistics. Pacific Linguistics. p. 456-485.
- Terrill, Angela (2002). *Dharumbal: the language of Rockhampton, Australia*. Pacific Linguistics 525. Pacific Linguistics. p. 108.

External links

- Bibliography of Darumbal people and language resources (http://aiatsis.gov.au/sites/default/files/docs/collections/language_bibs/darumbal.pdf), at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies

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